

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that Claims 11, 13, and 14 are allowed.

Applicants also thank the Examiner for the recommendations made on page 6, 3rd ¶ and page 15, lines 6-8 of the October 6, 2005 Office Action. In accordance with the Examiner's recommendations, Applicants have amended the Specification on page 11, line 23 in order to provide antecedent basis for original Claim 18. Upon entry of the amendment, it is believed that no new matter is added and no new issues are raised that require further consideration. Accordingly, it is requested that the Examiner withdraw the objection to the Specification as outlined in point 4 beginning on page 4 of the October 6, 2005 Office Action.

The rejection of Claims 1-10, 12, and 15-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the disclosure of US '717 is respectfully traversed. Applicants note that the present application and US '717 were, at the time the invention of the present application was made, owned by Ricoh Co., Ltd. It is kindly requested that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

In view of the amendment to the Specification and the exclusion of US '717 as prior art, it is believed that the present application is now in a condition for allowance. Should the Examiner deem that an interview would be helpful in advancing this application toward allowance, she is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the below-listed telephone number.

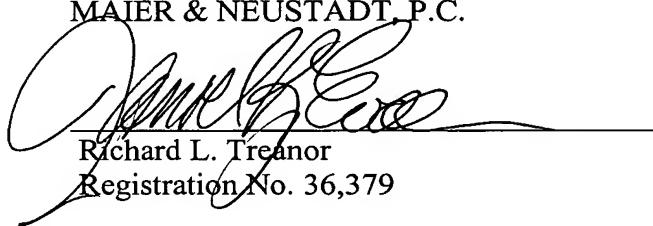
Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Richard L. Treanor
Registration No. 36,379

Daniel R. Evans, Ph.D.
Registration No. 55,868